(c) Necessary promotional support is being extended to ensure upgradation of processing facilities, expansion of aquaculture, training and other capacity building measures, value addition, marketing support.

(d) and (e) The United States International Trade Commission (US ITC) is conducting the Changed Circumstances Review of its decision of levying final anti-dumping duties on import of Indian shrimps and the MPEDA as well as the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) have been defending the interests of Indian shrimp farmers and industry.

(f) Does not arise in view of the above.

New subjects in protocol of WTO

963. SHRI S. M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that WTO is including new subjects and new areas without proper approval from Member-countries like India;

(b) whether it is a fact that the WTO has included new subjects like 'Competition Policy', Labour standards, etc., which were not in the original protocols of WTO;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government has not lodged any formal protest with WTO;

(d) if so, the reasons for Government not raising this issue in the proper fora; and

(e) the steps proposed in this regard by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (e) Decision making in World Trade Organisation (WTO) is governed by Article IX of the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO. However, decisions in WTO are taken by consensus among the WTO Members. Hence, the question of WTO taking any decision on inclusion of new subjects and new areas without approval of WTO Members does not arise.

At the Singapore Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in December, 1996, it was agreed to set up Working Groups on four issues, namely,

(i) relationship between Trade and Investment; (ii) interaction between Trade and Competition Policy; (iii) Transparency in Government Procurement and (iv) Trade Facilitation. These issues have come to be known as Singapore Issues.

In its Decision of 1 August, 2004 adopting the Framework Agreement providing a road map for continuing negotiations under the Doha Work Programme up to the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Hong Kong, China in December, 2005, the WTO General Council, *interalia*, decided to remove the three Singapore issues mentioned at (i) to (iii) above from the Doha Work Programme. It decided to commence negotiations on the remaining Singapore issue, namely, Trade Facilitation. The concerns and reservations raised by developing countries in starting negotiations on Trade Facilitation have largely been met in the modalities agreed for negotiation through extensive provision of Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries including the least developed countries. The negotiations would also aim at having effective provisions of cooperation between customs authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues.

The Singapore Ministerial Declaration, *inter alia*, recognised that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the competent body to set and deal with the core labour standards. It rejected the use of labour standards for protectionist purposes, and agreed that the comparative advantage of countries, particularly, low-wage developing countries, must in no way be put into question. The subsequent Ministerial Conference at Doha also reiterated this decision. Hence, the issue of core labour standards is within the domain of the ILO and not with the WTO.

Proposal to counter trade barriers in WTO talks

964. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how the Government propose to dispute the non-tariff barriers and the phytosanitary barriers imposed by certain developed countries in the coming WTO talks;

(b) whether any consultations have been held with experts in this field;